

This procedure made a bad budgetary process much worse causing me to write a consensus budget provision in the President's Revitalization Act that allows the parties to sit at the same table and write one budget. Even so, instead of that budget becoming law then, the District remains without a budget for months, often after the beginning of the fiscal year.

Under the legislation I introduce today, the District of Columbia still remains subject to the full appropriations process in the House and Senate for any federal funds. Nothing in this bill diminishes the power of the Congress to "exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever" over the District of Columbia under Article I, section 8, clause 17 of the U.S. Constitution should it choose to revise what the District has done concerning locally raised revenue. Nothing in this legislation prevents any Member of Congress from introducing a bill that addresses her specific concerns regarding the District. The Congress should grant the District the power to propose and enact its own budget containing its own revenue free from Congressional control now during the period when the Authority is still the monitoring mechanism providing an important incentive to help the District reach budget balance and meaningful Home Rule.

The second bill I introduce today, the District of Columbia Legislative Autonomy Act of 1999, eliminates the congressional review period of 30 days and 60 days respectively, for civil and criminal acts passed by the D.C. City Council. Under the current system, all acts of the Council are subjected to this Congressional layover period. This unnecessary and undemocratic step adds yet another unnecessary layer of bureaucracy to an already overburdened city government.

My bill would eliminate the need for the District to engage in the byzantine process of enacting emergency and temporary legislation concurrently with permanent legislation. The Home Rule charter contemplates that if the District needs to pass legislation while Congress is out of session, it may do so if two-thirds of the Council determines that an emergency exists, a majority of the Council approves the law and the Mayor signs it. Emergency legislation, however, lasts for only 90 days, which would (in theory) force the Council to the pass permanent legislation by undergoing the usual congressional review process when Congress returns. Similarly, the Home Rule Charter contemplates that the Council may pass temporary legislation lasting 120 days without being subjected to the congressional review process, but must endure the congressional layover period for that legislation to become law.

In actual practice, however, most legislation approved by the City Council is passed concurrently on an emergency, temporary and permanent basis to ensure that the large, rapidly changing city remains running. This process is cumbersome and inefficient and would be eliminated by my bill.

It is important to emphasize that my bill does not prevent review of District laws by Congress. The D.C. Subcommittee would continue to scrutinize every piece of legislation passed by the City Council if it wishes and to change or strike that legislation under the plenary authority over the District that the Constitution affords to the Congress. My bill merely eliminates the automatic hold placed on

local legislation and the need to pass emergency and temporary legislation to keep the District functioning.

Since the adoption of the Home Rule Act in 1973, over 2000 acts have been passed by the council and signed into law by the Mayor. Only thirty-nine acts have been challenged by a congressional disapproval resolution. Only three of those resolutions have ever passed the Congress and two involved a distinct federal interest. Two bills to correct for any federal interest, rather than a hold on 2000 bills, would have served the purpose and saved considerable time and money for the District and the Congress.

I ask my colleagues who are urging the District government to pursue greater efficiency and savings to do your part in giving the city the tools to cut through the bureaucratic maze the Congress itself has imposed upon the District. Congress has been clear that it wants to see the D.C. government taken apart and put back together again in an effort to eliminate redundancy and inefficiency. Congress should therefore eliminate the bureaucracy in D.C. that Congress is solely responsible for by granting the city budgetary and legislative autonomy.

Only through true budgetary and legislative autonomy can the District realize meaningful self-government and Home Rule. The President and the Congress took the first step in relieving the District of costly escalating state functions in the Revitalization Act. This bill takes the next logical step by granting the District control over its own budgetary and legislative affairs. I urge my colleagues to pass this important measure.

HONORING MARIE THERESE
DAMRELL GALLO

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Marie Therese Damrell Gallo in recognition of her being awarded the Anti-Defamation League's Torch of Liberty Award for the Central Pacific Region. Marie has established standards for charity and voluntarism which are remarkable—all the while, gaining the admiration and love of the many people who have had the pleasure and enjoyment of working with her.

I'm proud to report that first and foremost in Marie's life is an incredibly strong commitment to her family. Marie married Bob Gallo in 1958 and together they have raised 8 children, and have 10 grandchildren.

Yet while raising her family, Marie never forgot her commitment to her friends of her community. In tribute to her many accomplishments, Marie has also received the Liberty Bell award from the Stanislaus County Bar Association, the Standing Ovation Award from the Modesto Symphony Guild, the Outstanding Women of the Year award from the Stanislaus County Commission for Women, and The Cross for the Church and the Pontiff Papal award from His Holiness, John Paul II.

The diversity and breadth of her interests and concerns are amazing. She has been the founder and chairwoman of innumerable fundraising events for charitable organizations, in-

cluding the Modesto Symphony Guild's Holiday Overture, the American Diabetes Association of Stanislaus County's The Great Caper; the Opening Night Gala for the Central California Art League's Spring Show, the Bishop of Stockton's Celebration of Charity; An Evening Starring Loretta Young for the benefit of the Sisters of the Cross Convent; the YMCA of Stanislaus County's An Autumn Affair; and the Fashion Show for the benefit of St. Stanislaus School.

A native of Modesto, in my district in California's great Central Valley, Marie attended Lincoln Elementary, Roosevelt Junior High, and Modesto High School. She is a graduate of the College of Notre Dame and taught in the San Francisco school system before her marriage to Bob. Marie is an accomplished pianist and studied under Bernhard Abramowitsch at the University of California/Berkeley.

Mr. Speaker, Marie Gallo exemplifies the finest spirit of voluntarism and selfless dedication. I am proud to represent her in the Congress and ask that my colleagues rise and join me in honoring her.

TRIBUTE TO JACOB H. "BUD"
BLITZER

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of Jacob H. "Bud" Blitzer. Bud was a man of integrity and tremendous resilience, who used his creativity, intelligence, humor, and a sense of fairness to navigate through a life of great challenges.

A victim of polio at age 27, Bud—never one for self-pity—became a successful businessman, consultant, educator, mentor, and all around mensch. Most important to him were the relationships he cultivated with family, friends, the I Have a Dream Foundation, and the many people fortunate enough to know him.

But, with his brother-in-law Len Milner, founded Integrated Ceilings, Inc., specializing in innovative architectural custom ceiling designs. He held many patents for designs which have enhanced numerous office buildings, retail stores, and homes. These innovations inspired an entire industry of ceiling design. He ran his company with the highest standards of honesty, quality, and excellence. This commitment was reflected by the employees of the company who were loyal and proud of their product and most of whom remained with the company throughout the entire time that Bud was its president and CEO.

But did not limit himself to his company. He also served as a mentor for many young entrepreneurs as they began their businesses as well as many people who were struggling with the challenges of life. One notable example was Tom Greene of the T.A. Greene Co., of whom Bud was known to have said, "I started out helping Tom, but in the end, it was he who helped me."

Bud was a jazz drummer in his youth, served as an officer in the Army Air Corps, and was founder and president of the Lightrend Co., prior to founding Integrated Ceilings, Inc. An avid sailor and a jazz enthusiast, a conversationalist par excellence, Bud's

greatest gift was to make each person he spoke with feel special.

Our thoughts are with Bud's family: his wife Dalia; children Jamie and Rob, along with his wife Donna; sisters Barbara and Susan and their husbands George and Len; grandchildren Rebecca and Erica; two great grandchildren; nieces and nephews and many friends who were part of the extended family.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in remembering a great friend and outstanding individual, Jacob "Bud" Blitzer.

TRIBUTE TO THE LADY BULLDOGS

HON. BARON P. HILL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Women's Basketball Team from New Albany High School. The Lady Bulldogs won the Indiana High School Athletic Association class 4A basketball championship last Saturday, completing a perfect season.

Congratulations go out to the entire team: Catrina Wilson, Jessica Dablow, Maria Rickards, Abigail Scharlow, Jessica Huggins, Kennitra Johnson, Erin Wall, Amanda Sizemore, Lacy Farris, Noreen Cousins, Andrea Holbrook, Regina Marshall, Brittany Williams, and Jihan Huggins.

I also wish to congratulate: the team's coach Angie Hinton, her assistant coaches Denise Parrish, Paul Hamilton, Joe Hinton and Katie Myers, team trainer Russ Cook, student manager Melissa Fisher, the athletic director at New Albany Don Unruh, and school principal Steve Sipes.

The Lady Bulldogs are the pride of southern Indiana. I join their families, friends, classmates and community in celebrating their great accomplishment.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF NEW RESEARCH SUPPORTING THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC EDUCATION

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of new research supporting the benefits of music education.

The arts as an academic discipline have long been seen as an essential component of education. Recent scientific studies confirm what teachers of old have always known—music and the other arts stimulate higher brain function. Music education has been shown to elevate test scores in other subjects, particularly math. The Statement of Principles is an important document; it outlines seven basic concepts that, if followed, will maximize the benefits of arts education for all children. I entered these same Statements into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on September 10 so my colleagues might have a chance to review them.

Mr. Speaker, there is a growing body of research demonstrating a causal link between

the formal study of music and the development of spatial reasoning skills in young children. This past week new research from the University of California at Irvine has underscored this link by showing children who take piano lessons and play with newly designed computer software perform better on tests with fractions and proportional math than students not exposed to the piano lessons.

These findings are especially important when one considers that a grasp of fractions and proportional math is a prerequisite to math at higher levels, and children who do not master these areas of math cannot understand more advanced math critical to high-tech fields.

Music lovers like myself have long promoted music education as a way to inspire creativity, develop discipline, and cultivate an appreciation for the arts. Although we suspected gains in cognitive development, today we have the research to confirm it. I urge my colleagues to review the research and encourage families and educators in their Congressional districts to make music education a priority.

EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO DECLARATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE

SPEECH OF

HON. HOWARD P. (BUCK) McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 24, which opposes the unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood.

While the goal of achieving peace in the Middle East has long been elusive, we have in recent years seen progress where Israelis and Palestinians have come to the negotiating table to discuss their differences. This negotiating process should continue to be respected as the best means for Israelis and Palestinians to maintain a constructive dialogue on fundamental issues of concern. Unilateral actions that circumvent this process will only prolong potential solutions to the conflicts which have caused great harm to Arabs and Jews in Israel.

Approving the resolution before use today will convey an important message that the United States support continued negotiations as the best means to create lasting peace in a region where so much blood has been shed.

THE PENSION RIGHT TO KNOW ACT

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, do we not have a responsibility to help our constituents understand their benefits? As a large portion of today's population is nearing retirement, employer-sponsored retirement plans have increased in importance. And many people do not understand their benefits. It is an even greater problem when an employer unilaterally changes that plan, and minimal explanation is given.

I have some real concerns in these situations, and I believe we need to help our constituents understand their benefits when they are changed. The Wall Street Journal recently highlighted some of the information disclosure problems when companies change from a traditional pension plan to a cash-balance plan.

One particular situation involved a company who changed their plan and merely informed the employees that a change had occurred. One 49-year-old employee decided to look into this further, because he was thinking about his retirement. He discovered that while he was not going to lose any benefits, he was also not going to accrue any benefits for several years under this new plan. It was only through his efforts to learn more about it that he discovered this.

Now, let me point out that it is not the employer's fault, but the law's. That is why I have joined with Senator MOYNIHAN in introducing companion legislation to correct this problem.

The Pension Right to Know Act, H.R. 1176, will require increased disclosure of information to employees about their pension plan. It would require an explanation to the employee as to how their pension plan will be affected by any plan change. It will require an individual benefit statement for each employee showing how they, in particular, will be affected by this change. For some the change will be beneficial, but for others the change could affect how they plan for the future.

My colleagues, I believe we need to protect our constituents who may be expecting one thing, and then receive something very different. As employers make changes from various retirement plans to cash-balance plans, employees are left not understanding what changes have been made to their retirement plan.

We can help our citizens who are nearing retirement and thinking about their retirement savings program—and we can help them to understand.

Mr. Speaker, let us do what we can to help employees understand their options.

Let us work together. Let us solve this problem, and let us solve it together.

APPRECIATION OF THE HONORABLE IMATA KABUA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, last month I was privileged to travel with the House Resources Congressional Delegation to the Pacific Insular areas. Chairman DON YOUNG should be commended for providing this opportunity to Resource Committee members to educate themselves on the issues that confront the people of Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. In this regard our trip was a success and I hope that my colleagues who were fortunate to join the Young CODEL—Rep. DANA ROHRBACHER, Rep. JOHN DOOLITTLE, Rep. COLLIN PETERSON, Rep. KEN CALVERT, Rep. ENI FALEOMAVAEGA and Rep. DONNA CHRISTIAN-CHRISTENSEN—have gained a better understanding of Pacific Insular issues.